

Someone To Turn To by Val-Creative

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Summary: El finds meaning in her new identity and home and a relatively peaceful existence. When things don't go the way they should, she's grateful for Mike sticking with her. Max attempts to befriend her one last time, for the sake of their friends and themselves. /Post-Season 2. Mileven. El & Max friendship. Oneshot.

Someone To Turn To

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Home.

Home feels good.

There's no more Papa or laboratory experiments, and El enjoys seeing her friends every day. She gets to be what Lucas called *normal* for once. Normal kids live in houses with their families, he explained. They go to school, and play at the arcade, and have a full legal name instead of a number tattooed on their wrist.

Jane L. Hopper.

It's who she is now, scribbled across all of her documents and forged birth papers.

When she can, El visits her Momma. Momma can't talk to her, not really, but El likes sitting down in front of her and letting her know what's going on, how she's feeling, how much El loves her.

Hopper's face scrunches, like he's regretting his own words.

We're not gonna be able to head out there this afternoon, kid. Let's try for next weekend.

He grasps her hand, and El forcefully tugs away, slipping out of a comforting, familial touch. The rush of frustration sends a low, stinging heat that builds gradually behind El's eyes. She's not going to cry.

Crying is... stupid.

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The feeling carries on until the next day, but worsens. Her stomach and lower body hurts, the muscles aching. It feels like she's verge of breaking down into tears whenever something irritates her or upsets her.

El doesn't mean to be, but she's usually quiet, so nobody points it out.

Dustin and Will argue over something called *Thundercats*, racing out the front doors of Hawkins Middle School along with their group for the bike rake. El hesitates on the beaten, discolored steps below the entrance, plopping down on her bottom and tying her worn shoe lace.

A rattling of wheels over concrete. El glances up, as the noise draws closer. She narrows her eyes slightly as a girl about her age kicks up her skateboard, tossing and shaking out her frizzy, sunny red curls.

Max offers her a shy and friendly grin.

"Hey, do you remember me?"

There's a hopeful emotion buried in her voice, and El only frowns, continuing to tie her shoe.

"*Boy stealer*," she mutters.

Max's blue eyes go suddenly round. "Excuse me—*what*?" When nothing else is said, Max barks out a sarcastic, indignant laugh and throws her hands up in defeat. "Listen, okay. I've given you your space for half the year. I haven't done anything to you, and I sure as hell haven't stolen a *boy* from you."

From the distance, they both hear eager, loud shouts. El immediately looks for Mike pedaling gleefully away from the nearby parking lot, far too distracted to notice Max staring critically at her face.

"... I'm not interested in dating him, El," she speaks up flatly. Max raises her eyebrows pointedly when the other girl's head snaps around. A hot, embarrassed flush crawls up El's neck. "Got it?"

After a long, silent moment, El's mouth thins together.

"Got it," she repeats, whispering.

Max's expression softens. "Can we... start over, or something? It would be really cool if we could try and get along while we are all hanging out. If not for my sake, then everybody else's *and* Mike's."

The more she thinks about it, the more El slowly realizes there had been tension whenever her and Max were spending time in the party. Most of the tension coming from El who would glower and fume. Besides the time she saw Max and Mike inside the gymnasium, they rarely ever addressed each other.

But is that... fair? If Max is telling the truth about not wanting to date Mike, then shouldn't she be allowed to talk and have fun with Mike anyway? Mike isn't a *thing* to be controlled. He... should be *everyone's* friend.

El climbs back onto her feet, determinedly grabbing onto Max's right hand and pumping it up and down.

"... I'm sorry that I wasn't nice to you." A lighter sensation fills El's chest, as Max grins again. *Pretty*. "I don't think I'm good at making friends," El admits, murmuring and lowering her eyes.

"Me too," the other girl tells her, releasing El's fingers. "It sucks a lot."

Sucks?

El contemplates the word to herself. She thinks she's heard it before during a lesson, or read it from the dictionary, or...

Max's skateboard clatters down onto the ground, jolting her attention back.

"Wanna try it?" she asks cheerfully, her grin lengthening and toothy.

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With little bit of mental adjustment, El balances on the skateboard without her knees trembling.

She's seen Max do twirls and tricks on her own, and it's sort of amazing. Max doesn't even have powers to keep her steady. She just does it so effortlessly. A twinge of jealousy strikes El, but it feels... *different* this time. She's not really angry at *Max* for anything she has done or hasn't done.

"Hey, *hey*, I know you're cheating," Max calls out, disappointed, when El bows her head and frantically wipes under a nostril with her bare, smeared red knuckle. "Do it without your superpowers. C'mon."

Resisting the urge to glare, El steps with one foot off the skateboard, banishing her telekinetic hold on herself for the moment. She presses her weight back onto the skateboard, hopping on, only to have the object fly out from under both of her feet and skid into a curb. El's elbow smacks harshly onto the blacktop; she falls with a startled, low cry, banging her hip and knee along with it.

Max runs over huffing, crouching down and touching El's shoulder.

"Whoa—shit, you okay?" she yells, examining the other girl cringing on the ground and fighting back tears.

"*Something's wrong*," El whimpers, closing her eyes and wrapping an arm to her sensitive abdomen. Her muscles still protest and ache, and now she's probably bruised up everywhere.

A little panicky, Max babbles out an apology, helping El upright to her feet somehow and leading her inside. The first floor girl's bathroom is empty and too bright and smells like an industrial, sterilized lemon. El wrinkles her nose, reluctantly dredging up the memory of the toilet in her isolation cell.

"Uh, El?" Max's reflection aims her forefinger to the back of El's corduroy, light brown trousers. There's a dark bloody patch right on her bottom, much to El's horror. "When did you start your period?"

"... *Period?*"

A similar horror overwhelms Max.

"Oh my god." She throws her backpack off her shoulder, digging into it. "Hold on," Max orders sternly, thrusting almost her entire arm

inside before presenting a thick, satiny blue square into El's hand. "Get in the stall, right now, and don't say *anything* if someone walks in."

El remembers being told to keep the bathroom door *closed* when using it, but Max shoves her in, looking away purposely when El unbuttons her trousers and sits on the cold, toilet seat without arguing. She curiously strips off the blue, crinkly film off— "It's a sanitary napkin," Max grumbles, crossing her arms. "It's my only one I got, so you will have to get more. I can't believe you don't know what menstruation is."

There's more drying, dark blood on her underwear, and El places the cottony, white pad on the inside tentatively. "How long does the blood come?" she asks, dreading the answer when Max's expression strains.

"Less than a week. It's not the same for all girls." Max sighs, gazing at the ceiling. "I got mine last year."

"... that's why everything... *hurts*?"

Much to El's growing dismay, the other girl chuckles, lacking any humor. "Ohhh yeah, and it happens every month," Max informs her, finally meeting their eyes when El finishes re-buttoning. "Better get used to it."

"*Why*?"

There's a piercing, warm quality to Max's eyes. She sighs again, less appear troubled, walking out of the stall to allow El to go to the sink. "You should really ask someone else, but... alright... your body, every month..."

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She doesn't know how much time passes, but El still has unvoiced questions about the subject.

Max lets her borrow her flannel shirt before skating down another

hallway and vanishing. El knots the multicolored fabric around her waist to hide the obvious, nasty bloodstain, heading back to the entrance-way. From the middle school, it takes eight minutes to walk to Melvald's General Store.

"You're late," Hopper announces grumpily, dressed in his sheriff's uniform. He waited by the glass doors, approaching her as soon as she's completely in view and heading for Aisle 3. "*Hold on*—did you hear me?"

El shrugs.

"I got my period."

Whether it's how she says this matter-of-fact, or not, Hopper makes a faintly choking noise, blinking rapidly. "Your... you got *what*?" he replies, staring gobsmacked as El frowns thoughtfully up at him.

"Does that mean I can have a baby?"

Hopper inhales sharply and puts up his hands, half-circling, half-stumbling towards the registers.

"JOOOOOOOOYCE!"

It's barely thirty seconds before she shows up, lugging a seemingly heavy box under her armpit. "Jesus christ, Hopper!" Joyce yells, slamming the box onto her register. "What's the emergenc—?" She spots a deeply confused El, smiling and hugging her tightly. "Oh! Hi there, sweetheart. What's going on?"

"I need..." El halts, crinkling her brows. "*Sanitary napkins*," she mutters slowly. "For my *period*."

Unlike the other adult, Joyce nods understandingly — much to El's immense relief. "And *that's* why you were screaming like the place had gone up in flames?" she retorts at Hopper, semi-rolling her eyes.

"*She just—*"

"Come on, Jane. I'll show you what you need." Joyce tuts sympathetically, clasping onto El's hand and guiding her to Aisle 3.

"And your *dad* is gonna fork over the money, won't he?"

"Sure, whatever you want," Hopper groans, leaning on the register and rubbing fingertips over his eyelids.

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The aches become cramping, severe pain.

A lot of pain.

She ends up sprawling on a couch, lying motionlessly sideways and hugging her Momma's teddy bear fiercely against her upper half. El's legs curl up to herself, pressing harder against her forearms.

The one *nice* thing about being home "sick" is...

Mike emerges from the foyer, scratching the back of his neck and looking positively thwarted. El cranes her neck when she hears footsteps, watching attentively as his teeth nudge to his lower, pink-raw lip.

Pretty.

"El, I can't find any Tylenol. I'm gonna go pick some up from the store, okay?"

Her heart clenches.

"*Mike*," El pleads, raising her voice. "Don't leave."

Everything hurts so badly, in these new and weird sensations, and she doesn't feel that *awful* when he's there. Mike glances around quickly and comes over, kneeling, holding his palm gently to El's cheek.

"You need some medicine though." Mike's thumb strokes a nameless line against her skin. El almost turns into it, tempted for no reason at all to feel warmth brushing on her mouth. "Let me take care of you, okay?" he says, giving her an affectionate grin that, despite her mood,

sends familiar, pleasant tingles through her.

Her vision darkens. She leans into him, shutting her eyes briefly as Mike's lips push lightly to her forehead.

"I'll be back in ten minutes, El." He snatches up a walkie-talkie, leaving it on the armrest. Mike shows her his own walkie, gesturing a bit with it. "Stay on this channel. If you need me, I'll hear you."

Before he's out the door, the walkie crackles on with static feedback. Mike spins around, his eyes glued to El as she holds the device close to her face, staring right at him. "Four forty three," El says resolutely. They're only a couple feet apart, at the most, and Mike smiles so big his dimples pop, checking his watch.

"Four forty three, yeah. I'll let you know if I'm later."

"... Mike?"

It's almost a breathy whisper, but he's listening for every syllable.

El echoes a small, adoring smile, clutching her teddy bear right under her chin.

"*Thanks.*"

For a split-second, Mike's body tenses visibly, as if restraining himself. As if he wanted to return to her. To kiss her again, or hug her until they're both calm and at peace, and it's real as anything in Mike's dark brown eyes. He does the unselfish thing, walking away, disappearing through the Hopper residence's door.

Crestfallen, she pouts a little, looking at the television set. El grunts, carelessly flopping her arm out. The dial flips on, switching through blurry, kaleidoscopic programs, until she settles on *Young and the Restless*.

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Being friends with Max feels... *good*.

She teaches El how to keep her balance while on her skateboard, introduces El to Velcro and eyeliner and bejeweled, pastel headbands and Wrestlemania during a late night sleepover.

Max has an older brother *Billy*. He ran out of their house before Christmas, stealing five hundred dollars in cash and one of his Mom's diamond rings. Billy's car hasn't been seen in Hawkins, Indiana since. His bedroom remains locked by his parents, but Max says all his things are still there, minus a few of his personal belongings.

With two hairpins, Max jimmies open the door, proudly smacking the wooden frame with an open hand. They rummage his closet and his drawers, finding an unopened package of cigarettes and hair gel within all of the mess and abandoned, wrinkled clothes. El pulls out a glossy, full-colored magazine from a sock drawer, eyeing a smiling, tanned woman with teased, bright blond hair posing in her swimsuit.

"No, *no*," Max giggles, yanking the opened, highly explicit magazine out of El's hands and tossing it underneath Billy's mattress. "Don't touch that, El. You don't know where it's been."

They throw on dusty leather jackets from Billy's closet and tinted, black sunglasses. El clutches onto Max's waist from behind the other girl, riding along with her down the street. Through another neighborhood, she sees their friends strapped in padded gear and playing hockey in their sneakers, racing into each other.

Dustin thrusts off his face-guard, sweating and breathing hard.

"Guys, did you hear about the surgeon last month who wanted to use *zippers* instead of stitches on his patients—"

"Well, well," Max interrupts with a haughty grin, slowing her and El, "if it isn't *the losers club*."

Lucas narrows his eyes, gazing dubiously over both girls.

"... You hang out with *us*."

She snorts and covers her mouth, trying to not burst out laughing. Lucas then smiles, getting nudged playfully by Dustin and Will. El places a foot onto the grass, removing the dark, oversized sunglasses

obstructing her sight as Mike beams and raises a hockey-mitten up high above him, waving in her direction.

"Hey, El," he says, a little dreamy-eyed.

El's mouth quirks up.

"Hi, Mike."

"*Every breeeeathe you taaaaake*," Dustin singsongs, getting the back of his knee rudely slapped with Will's stick. He curses, and while no one is looking, a frowning, impatient Max elbows El in her torso until she puts back on her sunglasses and wrapped her arms back securely around Max's waist, returning to the skateboard.

"Later, boys!" Max yells over their voices, cocking a finger arrogantly and taking off with a swing of her leg.

Before they turn a street-corner, El peeks over her shoulder to Mike ignoring the chatter and earnestly watching her leave. Her mouth widens into another smile.

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"I know you're madly in love with Mike and everything, but have you ever... kissed *anyone* else?"

Genuinely baffled, El tilts her head for a moment.

"Why would I?" she asks.

Max shrugs. "Because it's fun."

El's fingers twist a silky, aqua-green ribbon into Max's flaming orange hair. She concentrates on how Max taught her to braid... *left strand over the middle stand, right stand over the new middle strand... ...*

"... Do you ever kiss people for fun?"

"*No duh.*" Max's face lights up. El watches her freckled, sunburned

expression, silently fascinated, adjusting her legs folded together. "In my old neighborhood, when we would play spin the bottle... if it landed on a girl, I would still kiss her. Everybody would laugh and tease me, but I didn't care," Max confesses bashfully. She stares at El focusing on her task, beginning to smirk. "You don't find that weird, huh?"

El shakes her head. She's only wanted to kiss Mike, but that doesn't mean other people can't kiss other people. Why does it matter if they were a boy or a girl or someone else? *Girls*... El considers this for a moment, her fingers slackening in a tangle of red hair. Girls are *pretty*. Mike can be *pretty*, too.

"What's kissing a girl like?" El murmurs, gazing up and flattening her lips together.

She wonders if Max won't answer her, or tell her she's not being *normal*, but the other girl smiles pleasantly and grasps onto both of her shoulders.

"It's really easy, here—" The rest of Max's sentence breathes warmly onto El's mouth, as she leans in and presses their mouths together. It's only a few seconds, but El's world halts to a standstill as a result — *gentle* and sweet and bubbly like the flavor of Diet Coke on Max's lips. "—See, easy," Max says offhandedly, leaning out. "Nothing different about it from kissing a boy."

El blinks, unable to hide her awestruck look.

"Your lips. They're really soft," she points out quietly. "Mike's lips aren't like that."

Max's smile widens into a full-fledged, eager grin. She flushes. "I can teach you to *really* drive him wild." A pair of hands thread into El's brown curls, pushing them away and cupping her face. Max urges them closer, almost as if she's gonna kiss her again. El feels herself going cross-eyed, her pulse thudding fast.

"Okay, so, in your head imagine you're kissing him," Max instructs, dropping her voice to a murmur. El nods in agreement, steeling herself. *Mike* — he's fragments of emotions and good intentions,

stronger than any darkness, any *fear* she has. "You're gonna let him kiss you first, but *then...*" Max's fingertips slide up, stroking over the round outsides of El's ears and to her lobes, tugging down softly. "How's that feel?"

A tiny, pleasant shudder races through her.

"... good," El mumbles, eyes half-lidded.

Max stares fondly at her, petting and combing El's hair one-handed. Their noses brush on accident, and one of the girls nuzzles their faces, until they're both smiling and giggling loudly.

The happiness and *safety* overcoming El fades as soon as she hears a man bellowing at the top of his lungs, storming into Max's bedroom. He grabs a fistful of reddish hair, dragging a terrified, paling Max onto her feet, swearing. It's not *words* coming out of Max's father as much as furious roaring.

Before she knows it, El is left alone, completely shell-shocked. In the opened hallway, she listens to Max sobbing out *I'm sorry! I'm sorry please!* and whimpering as a loud, angry slap echoes.

That's when El's eyes widen in realization. He's *hurting* her.

"Max!" she screams. "MAX!"

El scrambles onto her feet, clutching roughly onto the sides of the ivory door-frame. Max kicks frantically against the hallway rug, being thrown against a wall by her father as glittering, wet tears run down her face.

A flash-flare memory crashes into El — *Eleven, weeping and yanked forward, the steel laboratory floor cold and unforgiving and beneath her naked feet — Papa! — Papa! Papa! PAPA! —*

The ornate, gilded hallway lamp flickers on, dimming before intensifying and whirring angrily.

El lowers her head and glares outright, a thin dribble of blood erupting her nostril. Hatred fills her, surging and manifesting in an invisible, telekinetic hold. All of the lamps in Max's house brighten,

flickering rapidly.

Bad man.

With a jerk of her neck, El summons the weight of the nearby snow-globe, chucking it against the skull of Max's father hard enough for it the lead-based glass to shatter open. A clear, sparkly liquid and blood gushes on the back of his head, and he groans weakly, collapsing with a twitch onto the rug as Max shrieks.

There's no silence, only El's heart pouncing in her ears and Max's sobbing getting louder. The other girl continues to defensively shield herself, rocking against her knees and pressing her reddened, blotchy face to her jeans. "Max," El whispers in concern, rushing over to her, hugging her awkwardly. She's not sure what else to say or to do, but feels Max's arms envelope her suddenly, hugging her back.

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As far as the doctors understand it, Max's father injured himself pretty badly. He goes into a coma for a month, before waking up and having no memory of *falling* or what actually happened to him.

"They think he's ended up with a severe brain injury or something. That's why he's not acting like himself and being so nice to us," Max explains dully, jerking her locker open. She looks over El's shoulder as Mary Anne Baker and her two best friends smirk maliciously, preparing to walk by. "It's finally quiet."

"Nice tits, Maxine—"

El grabs onto Mary Anne's perfectly starched blouse with her left hand, heaving her up against the lockers. Max startles, calling out El's school name, gazing around as a couple other middle schoolers watch in anticipation.

"What the *HELL*, you *FREAK*?" she screeches, gawking into El's pinched, enraged features.

"Stay away from Max," El murmurs. "Got it?"

"FINE!"

As soon as the girls retreat, side-eyeing El with venomous intent, one or two middle schoolers clap and hoot. Max frowns disapprovingly, slamming her locker shut. "El, it's okay. You don't have to protect me. I can fight my own battles here," she says tonelessly. El's apology disappears off the surface of her lips, when the other girl embraces her wordlessly and snugly, burying her entire face into El's throat.

"Thank you," Max whispers, quivering a little. She sniffles. "... *You're my best friend.*"

El's eyelashes quiver too, dampening.

"Mine too."

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It's a cursed, inked number, always there, always reminding her.

El glares down at the small tattoo on her wrist, flicking open her switchblade. She lays her arm on the kitchen table, under the overhead, glowy light, pressing the tip of the blade on the circular edge of the 0.

She winces, teeth gritting, feeling the cold, fresh sting of metal puncturing her flesh.

No crying, damn it. Crying is *stupid*.

Mike will hear her.

Blood wells up alarmingly quick, seeping from the developing wound as El curves the blade around the first 1, unable to see the teeny flap of skin within a pool of dark red fluid.

"El!" Mike's voice cracks, heightening. He shouts, running over from the den, "El, *stop!* What are you doing?!" El raises her arm off the

table, attempting to pull away when Mike's fingers grasp around her forearm.

"Mike, no," she mutters.

"El!"

"No."

His hold on her feels slippery and loose due to the blood, but Mike's face remains tightened by horror and outrage. El's chest... it feels *tighter* than that, twisty and hot. Her eyes burning with moisture.

Mike clamps his palm over the wound, trying to stop the bleeding. "YOU NEED TO—*STOP* IT, EL!" he shouts over her.

"*STOP YELLING AT ME!*" El screams into his face, more forcefully and angrily. The light-bulb high above them rattles dangerously in its socket, brightening away the shadows within a three foot radius. After another few, long moments, the bulb hums and dulls to a less intense lighting.

There's only silence to follow.

El avoids his eyes, blinking out a tear and letting Mike guide her to the sink. He says nothing as well, soaping up her bloody wound and rinsing it, his expression solemn and unreadable.

She bits the inside of her cheek, glancing up in dread when Mike starts bandaging her wrist.

"You're mad at me..."

"I'm not," Mike says lowly. El sends him a doubtful, frowning look and he insists, "I'm not lying. I'm *worried* about you. You can't just mutilate yourself." Will's eyebrows bunch together, as if he's remembering. "What about Will's idea of getting a tattoo over it?" he adds. "Did you talk to Hopper about it?"

El shakes her head. "I want it gone *now*," she mutters stubbornly, wincing again as Mike mumbles *sorry*, *didn't mean to* and secures the gauze and bandage in place with fabric, stretchy hooks. "... This

sucks."

A breathy, rumbling laugh.

They're close enough to touch knees and legs and feet, while sitting at the table. Mike's lips twitch into a half-smile, aiming for her. It's *amazement* seizing her, when he gently cradles her arm up, wrapping his fingers into hers, pressing a dutiful, featherlight kiss to the bandage-white space of her wrist.

"Why do you do that?" she murmurs, almost ruefully.

Mike looks up. "Hmm?"

"Be so good to me... all the time."

His confusion dwindles, replacing with a bigger, heartfelt grin. He reaches for her cheek, holding it. El leans into his palm, touching her fingers shyly over Mike's hand. "*Because...* you deserve to be happy," Mike tells her. His sincerity overwhelming. "I wanna make you happy, and I wanna see you smile and laugh, El."

"I'm happy..." El repeats back, softer, trusting. "Are you happy, Mike?"

"*Yeah.*"

He's hesitating again. Like in the entrance-way, Mike's body tensing before making a decision.

El drops her eyes obviously to his mouth, scooting in, tucking a knee between his. That's enough of a signal for Mike to lean over his chair, into her airspace. He kisses her like El will break any second, with the slightest bit pressure. She huffs to herself, cupping Mike's face tenderly and mindful of her injury.

Pressing harder into the next close-mouthed kiss, El strokes her thumb over the curve of Mike's ear — *I can teach you* — pressing the side of her finger and thumb over his earlobes, stroking again gently.

Mike's hands drop, clutching onto the tops of her knees. He gasps a little against her mouth, lips parting. It sends a *thrill* charging, from

every nerve-end, straight down to El's belly. She opens her own lips to his, nudging them over Mike's bottom lip, sucking down, tasting a hint of pepper and malted chocolate—

They jolt apart, eyes widening, when a toolbox bangs onto the kitchen table.

"*Shit*," Mike mutters, scrubbing his hands over his face. Hopper sends him and his potty mouth a warning look before nodding to El's wrist and the dried, crusting blood on his linoleum.

"What the hell happened here?"

"Mistake," she deadpans.

Hopper raises an eyebrow incredulously, removing his sheriff's hat.

"What did I tell you? You gotta use full sentences in the house."

"El cut herself while—"

"*Did* I ask you?" Hopper interrupts, now stern-faced on Mike. The teenager goes an ugly shade of red, bowing his head and almost physically shrinking in the kitchen chair.

"Mike cleaned it," El informs him without batting an eyelash. "I'm okay."

A gruff nod.

"It's time for you two to say good night, alright?"

As soon as Mike gets to his feet and heads for the corridor, Hopper touches El's upper arm. "Wait a second..." he says, gripping on and embracing around the shoulders. El obeys the unspoken command, shutting her eyes to the ticklishly heated sensation of him kissing the top of her head. "Love you, kid."

The corners of El's mouth upturn. "Love you," she whispers.

"No funny business!" Hopper yells, as a smiley, gleeful El races out the front door. It's nearly sunset with orange blossoming between

sheets of clouds. Grass slicks wet and prickly against her bare toes.

She greets Mike by the rusty, old mailbox, clasping her hands together.

"Your dad is gonna kill me one of these days," he says dismally, gazing over the set of windows. A patterned, blue curtain shifts by itself, revealing Hopper's lurking shadow.

El's fingernail scrapes on the edge of her bandage.

"He thinks you're a knucklehead... Knucklehead."

Mike recognizes the *challenge* in her dark eyes, and laughs, tilting his head and kissing her fiercely. "See you at the arcade tomorrow, El!" he hollers, taking off on his bike as fast as humanly possible before Hopper has stepped out onto the porch.

El's own laughter echoes through the night air.

Home.

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Stranger Things doesn't belong to me. I HAVE ONE COMPLIANT ABOUT SEASON 2... AND IT'S THAT EL AND MAX ARE NOT BEST FRIENDS. OR EVEN FRIENDS AT ALL. I had to write it. I can't wait another 1-2 years for the Mileven cuteness and El & Max becoming friends. I hope everybody reading has fun reading this version! Thank you to my online pals for listening to me babble about this. ALSO... THIS TURNED OUT A LITTLE MORE SAPPHIC THAN I MEANT IT TO BE. Me, a known gay, should have seen this coming. However, I've had female friendship like this where we were both sapphic and affectionate, but ended up platonic in the end. It happens IRL! Any positive thoughts/comments are deeply appreciated, because I worked my ass off to do this fic. WHAT WAS YOUR FAVE MOMENT OR CHARACTER FROM SEASON 2?